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# PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS.

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*For the Month of November, 1697.*

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I. Part



I. Part of Two Letters of Mr. Thoresby, one to Dr. Martin Lister, Fellow of the Colledge of Physicians, and Royal Society; Dated Leeds, Oct. 30. 1697. the other to the Reverend Dr. Tho. Gale, Dean of York, and F. R. S. Dated Leeds, Nov. 6. 1697. about some Roman Antiquities found in York-shire.

Leeds, Oct. 30. 1697.

I Have had pretty good Hap in adding to my Roman Curiosities, Two entire Urns, both of the Blewish-Grey Clay, but different Forms, with some of the burnt Bones, and Two other Vessels of the Red Clay, the lesser of them is almost in the Form of the Roman *Simpulum* or *Guttus*, and by the Narrowness of the Neck seems rather to have been a kind of *Lacrymatory*, or Vessel for some kind of liquid Matter, rather than Ashes, the other was part of an Aqueduct, and is turn'd in the Form of a Scrue on the inside, and has a narrow Neck at one end, to put into the open end of the next, and several of these (each a Foot long and Four Inches broad) were found thus placed in the Roman Burying Place at York, by the River side, out of *Boutham Bar*, which our Learned Dean, Dr. Gale, tells me, signifies Burning in the British Language, and 'twas indisputably the Place the Romans made use of to that end, as appears by the great Number of Urns there frequently found, when they dig the Clay for Bricks, and that it continued the place of their Sepulture after that Custom of Burning,

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introduced in the tyrannous Dictatorship of *Scylla*, was abolished, is Evident, by a remarkable *Hypogæum* without any Urns in it, discovered the last Winter; 'twas large enough to contain Two or Three Corpses, and was paved with Bricks nigh Two Inches thick, Eight in breadth and length, being *Æquilaterally Square*, upon which was a second Pavement of the same Roman Bricks to cover the Seams of the Lower, and prevent, the working up of Vermin. But those that cover'd the Vault were the most remarkable that ever I saw, being above Two Foot square, and of a proportionable thickness. I have also a Third Sort of Roman Bricks, which I discovered in my Survey of this Parish, in the Ruins of *Kirkstall Abby*, Two Miles from *Leeds*, which come the highest those mentioned by *Vitruvius*, being Eight Inches broad, and almost double the length. I have also Two Sorts of chequered Pavements, one of about Three Inches square, the other (of those found at *Aldbrough*) not above half or one fourth of an Inch, and of different Colours, &c. At the same time I took the Inscription below the Statue, of the Standard-bearer of the Ninth Legion, which *Dr. Fairfax* happily rescued from the Ignorant Workmen; but the Dean of *York* (to whom I communicated it) is able to give a better Comment upon it.

*Leeds, Nov. 6. 1697.*

SINCE I had the Happiness to see you at *York*, I have met with nothing that is rare, save some very fair Coins, or rather Impressions upon Clay, which the Reverend Mr. *Clark* (the Lady *Campden's* Lecturer at *Wakefield*) brought me, that he had happily rescued from some Labourers, who in delving in Fields near *Thorp*, on the Hill found a considerable Number of them, at first



first we could not imagine for what use they were designed, but upon a stricter view, it appears plainly, they were for the Coining, or rather Counterfeiting of the Roman Moneys, that wretched Art it seems being in vogue 1500 Years ago, for they are indisputably of that Antiquity, and are really very dexterously done; they have round the Impression a Rim, about half the thickness of the Roman Silver Penny, in each of which is a little Notch, which being join'd to the like Nick in the next, makes a round Orifice to poure in the Mettal; each of these has either Two Heads, or as many Reverses; so that placing one, for Example, with *Alexander Severus's* Head on one side, and his Mother *Julia Mamaea's* on the other, betwixt Two Pieces with Reverses, it compleats both; so that one with Heads, and another with Reverses, are placed alternatim for a considerable length, and then all pass'd over with an outer Coat of Clay, to keep the Metal from running out, and a little Ledge on either side the Orifice, to convey the Metal into the long row of Holes: They are all of Emperors about the same Age, when indeed the Roman Moneys were notoriously adulterated, as is observable in any Collection of their Coins, though some of them now are so scarce, particularly a *Duodumenianus*, that I question whether this Age can produce one to take a Copy of.